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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/031,353

04/11/2002

Edward S. Yeung

215390

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04/20/2006

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EXAMINER

STOCK JR, GORDON J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2877

DATE MAILED: 04/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/031,353

Applicant(s)

YEUNG ET AL.

AM

Examiner

Gordon J. Stock

Art Unit

2877

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-23,57-65 and 67-91 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-23,57-65 and 67-91 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 April 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The Amendment received on February 1, 2006 has been entered into the record.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. **Claims 1, 3-8, 10-13, 15-20, 65, 67-72, 74-76, and 78-82** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Simpson et al. (6,485,625)—previously cited** in view of **Stapleton (5,188,963)—previously cited**.

As to **claims 1, 3-8, 10-13, 15-18**, Simpson discloses the following: subjecting a sample comprising multiple molecules, at least two molecules are labeled to electrophoresis since four different fragments are labeled; imaging the mobility of each labeled molecule over time by detecting the position of the label over time; dispersing the imaging by a transmission grating; determining the electrophoretic mobility and the molecular spectrum; distinguishing molecules; at least four molecules are a nucleic acid and/or protein detectably labeled with a fluorescent dye; at least one small molecule may be a Sanger sequencing reaction fragment; said sample comprises a buffer; the at least two molecules with label has fluorescence induced by a laser; the fluorescence is focused on the imaging means; using an intensified CCD camera, TE/CCD 1023E detector from Princeton Instruments Inc.; laser filters are positioned in front of said imaging means; multiframe method is used; the mobility is imaged in less than about 5 milliseconds, 4000 frames per .1 second; at least one molecule is at a concentration of at least about 1 copy per milliliter, .5 microliters of sample was analyzed was loaded into the gel. (Figs. 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 11-13, 14a, 14b, 17(1), 17(2), 18a, 18b; col. 5, lines 20-30 and 50-67; col. 6, lines 1-

Art Unit: 2877

15 and 45-55; col. 7, lines 5-20 and 60-67; col. 8, lines 130; col. 9, lines 60-65; col. 10, lines 15-65; cols. 11-12; cols. 31-32; col. 40, lines 15-55). And Simpson does disclose a sieving matrix (col. 19, lines 60-67). And discloses at least two molecules distinguished from spectral analysis (Figs. 17-19). In addition, he discloses that each of the least two detectably labeled molecules are individually distinguished simultaneously for at least 5 separate labels and even upto 8 separate labels may be identified simultaneously in one channel (col. 13, lines 1-20).

As for electrophoresis in an aqueous solution, Simpson states that the electrophoresis is performed in an aqueous mixture with acrylamide (col. 20, lines 10-15).

Simpson is silent concerning no amplification. Stapleton in a device for processing specimens for nucleic acid analysis teaches the equivalence of sample preparation with no amplification but with hybridization prior to electrophoresis and detection of particular fluorophores (Fig. 9). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the sample hybridized prior to electrophoresis and optical detection, for hybridization as a sample preparation is an art recognized equivalent to amplification as a sample preparation for electrophoresis with optical detection. In addition, Stapleton teaches that no amplification may be used for less complex samples (col. 18, lines 19-25). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also have simpler samples not amplified prior to electrophoresis in order to distinguish between less complex samples such as from bacteria and to save time from not having to prep the sample for hybridization and/or amplification.

As to **claims 19 and 20**, Simpson in view of Stapleton discloses everything as above (see **claim 1**). As for the particular acquisition rates Simpson is silent. However, the acquisition rate

Art Unit: 2877

depends on several factors such as electrode voltage, electrophoretic mobility, frame rate, image processing rate, and fluorescence. This acquisition rate would be considered an optimized value. Simpson discloses the claimed invention except for the particular acquisition rates. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have the particular acquisition rates, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980)

As to **claims 65, 67-72, 74-76, 78-80**, Simpson discloses the following: introducing a sample comprising multiple molecules in free solution at least two are detectably labeled into a sample channel for four different dyes are used for four different base fragments; imaging the position of labeled molecule and dispersing image by a transmission grating; determining molecular spectrum; distinguishing at least one molecule; the molecule may be a labeled nucleic acid or protein; at least one small molecule may be a Sanger sequencing reaction fragment; sample comprises a buffer; the labeled sample is fluoresced by a laser; there is focusing of the fluorescent label on imaging means; an intensified CCD camera, TE/CCD 1023E detector, comprises the imaging means; a laser filter is positioned before the imaging means; imaging happens in 4000 frames per .1 second; .5 microliters of sample is analyzed (Figs. 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 11-13, 14a, 14b, 17(1), 17(2), 18a, 18b; col. 5, lines 20-30 and 50-67; col. 6, lines 1-15 and 45-55; col. 7, lines 5-20 and 60-67; col. 8, lines 1-30; col. 9, lines 60-65; col. 10, lines 10-65; cols. 11-12; cols. 31-32; col. 40, lines 15-55). And discloses at least two molecules distinguished from spectral analysis (Figs. 17-19)

Art Unit: 2877

Simpson is silent concerning no amplification. Stapleton in a device for processing specimens for nucleic acid analysis teaches the equivalence of sample preparation with no amplification but with hybridization prior to electrophoresis and detection of particular fluorophores (Fig. 9). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the sample hybridized prior to electrophoresis and optical detection, for hybridization as a sample preparation is an art recognized equivalent to amplification as a sample preparation for electrophoresis with optical detection. In addition, Stapleton teaches that no amplification may be used for less complex samples (col. 18, lines 19-25). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also have simpler samples not amplified prior to electrophoresis in order to distinguish between less complex samples such as from bacteria and to save time from not having to prep the sample for hybridization and/or amplification.

As to **claims 81 and 82**, Simpson in view of Stapleton discloses everything as above (see **claim 65**). As for the particular acquisition rates Simpson is silent. However, the acquisition rate depends on several factors such as electrode voltage, electrophoretic mobility, frame rate, image processing rate, and fluorescence. This acquisition rate would be considered an optimized value. Simpson discloses the claimed invention except for the particular acquisition rates. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have the particular acquisition rates, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980)

Art Unit: 2877

4. **Claims 21, 22, 58, 60-64, 83, 84, 86, 88-91** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Simpson et al. (6,485,625)—previously cited** in view of **Stapleton (5,188,963)—previously cited**.

As for **claims 21, 22, 58, 60-62, 83, 84, 86, 88 and 89** Simpson discloses the following system: an electrophoretic sample channel; a monochromatic light source that irradiates sample; imaging means; a transmission grating; a lens between said light source and sample for focusing light; imaging means is an intensified CCD camera, TE/CCD 1023E detector; at least one filter, a laser filter; imaging means images 4000 frames per .1 second (Figs. 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 11-13, 14a, 14b, 17(1), 17(2), 18a, 18b; col. 5, lines 20-30 and 50-67; col. 6, lines 1-15 and 45-55; col. 7, lines 5-20 and 60-67; col. 8, lines 1-30; col. 9, lines 60-65; col. 10, lines 10-65; cols. 11-12; cols. 31-32; col. 40, lines 15-55). And discloses at least two molecules distinguished from spectral analysis (Figs. 17-19). In addition, he discloses that each of the least two detectably labeled molecules are individually distinguished simultaneously for at least 5 separate labels and even upto 8 separate labels may be identified simultaneously in one channel (col. 13, lines 1-20).

Simpson is silent concerning no amplification. Stapleton in a device for processing specimens for nucleic acid analysis teaches the equivalence of sample preparation with no amplification but with hybridization prior to electrophoresis and detection of particular fluorophores (Fig. 9). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the sample hybridized prior to electrophoresis and optical detection, for hybridization as a sample preparation is an art recognized equivalent to amplification as a sample preparation for electrophoresis with optical detection. In addition, Stapleton teaches that no amplification may be used for less complex samples (col. 18, lines 19-

Art Unit: 2877

25). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also have simpler samples not amplified prior to electrophoresis in order to distinguish between less complex samples such as from bacteria and to save time from not having to prep the sample for hybridization and/or amplification.

As to **claims 63, 64, 90, and 91**, Simpson in view of Stapleton discloses everything as above (see **claims 21 and 83**). As for the particular acquisition rates Simpson is silent. However, the acquisition rate depends on several factors such as electrode voltage, electrophoretic mobility, frame rate, image processing rate, and fluorescence. This acquisition rate would be considered an optimized value. Simpson discloses the claimed invention except for the particular acquisition rates. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have the particular acquisition rates, since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980)

5. **Claims 9 and 73** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Simpson et al. (6,485,625)**—previously cited in view of **Stapleton (5,188,963)**—previously cited and further in view of **Schwartz et al. (6,221,592)** and **Chu (5,215,883)**—both previously cited.

As to **claims 9 and 73**, Simpson in view of Stapleton discloses everything as above (see **claims 8 and 72**). Simpson is silent concerning photobleaching. However, Schwartz in nucleic acid sequencing teaches photobleaching for eliminating fluorescence signals between cycles and to eliminate bulky moieties after they have served their purpose (col. 33, lines 55-67). In addition, Chu in electrophoretic system teaches photobleaching for demarcation of areas for

Art Unit: 2877

detection (col. 8, lines 10-50). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to photobleach the buffer in order to eliminate possible fluorescent signals after certain substituents have served their purpose and/or possibly to demarcate areas for detection.

6. **Claims 14 and 77** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Simpson et al. (6,485,625)**—previously cited in view of **Stapleton (5,188,963)**—previously cited and further in view of **Yguerabide et al. (6,586,193)**—previously cited and **Hayashizaki et al. (6,120,667)**—previously cited.

As to **claims 14 and 77**, Simpson in view of Stapleton discloses everything as above (see **claims 12 and 75**). Simpson is silent concerning a pinhole and equilateral prism. Yguerabide teaches in an analyte assay using labels that equilateral prisms are used to enhance to signal to noise (col. 59, lines 20-45). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the system comprise an equilateral prism to enhance signal to noise of the system. And Hayashizaki in an electrophoresis apparatus teaches a pinhole to limit the detection field (col. 7, lines 15-25). Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the system comprise a pinhole in order to limit the detection field.

7. **Claims 23, 57, and 85** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Simpson et al. (6,485,625)**—previously cited in view of **Stapleton (5,188,963)**—previously cited further in view of **Yguerabide et al. (6,586,193)** and **Hayashizaki et al. (6,120,667)**—both previously cited.

Art Unit: 2877

As to **claims 23, 57, and 85**, Simpson in view of Stapleton discloses everything as above (see **claims 21, 22, and 84**). Simpson is silent concerning a pinhole and equilateral prism.

Yguerabide teaches in an analyte assay using labels that equilateral prisms are used to enhance to signal to noise (col. 59, lines 20-45). Therefore, it would be obvious to one skilled in the art to have the system comprise an equilateral prism to enhance signal to noise of the system.

Hayashizaki in an electrophoresis apparatus teaches a pinhole to limit the detection field (col. 7, lines 15-25). Therefore, it would be obvious to one skilled in the art to have the system comprise a pinhole in order to limit the detection field.

8. **Claims 59 and 87** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Simpson et al. (6,485,625)—previously cited** in view of **Stapleton (5,188,963)—previously cited** further in evidence of **Brumley et al. (5,538,613)—previously cited**.

As for **claims 59 and 87**, Simpson discloses everything as above (see **claims 58 and 86**). In addition, Simpson discloses objective lenses (col. 12, lines 1-40). In addition, Brumley in an electrophoresis analyzer teaches using a microscope objective for focusing (Fig. 1).

Response to Arguments

9. Applicant's arguments filed February 1, 2006 with respect to the claims have been fully considered but have not been found persuasive by the Examiner. As for the arguments concerning Simpson not disclosing 'in an aqueous solution' in claim 1 or 'wherein the sample is maintained in the sample channel as an aqueous solution' in claim 65. Examiner disagrees. As for electrophoresis in an aqueous solution, Simpson states that the electrophoresis is performed in an aqueous mixture with acrylamide (col. 20, lines 10-15). In evidence Sugihara ('354) discloses an aqueous solution for electrophoresis with acrylamide (col. 3, lines 22-45) as well as

Art Unit: 2877

Sugihara ('629) discloses an aqueous solution with acrylamide (col. 3, lines 10-20; col. 4, lines 50-57).

In regards to the arguments concerning 'in an aqueous solution' or 'wherein the sample is maintained in the sample channel as an aqueous solution' in claims 21 and 83 and their dependent claims not being demonstrated in the reference, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., 'in an aqueous solution' or 'wherein the sample is maintained in the sample channel as an aqueous solution') are only recited in method claims 1 and 65. In addition, the phrases "for use in the method of claim 1/65" are part of the preamble of claims 21 and 83 and describe an intended use: the recitation that "for use in the method of claim 1/65" has not been given patentable weight because it has been held that a preamble is denied the effect of a limitation where the claim following the preamble is a self-contained description of the structure not depending for completeness upon the introductory clause. *Kropa v. Robie*, 88 USPQ 478 (CCPA 1951). In addition, it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex Parte Masham*, 2 USPQ F.2d 1647 (1987).

Examiner would like to comment on the use of 'optionally' on line 13 of **claim 1** and line 13 of **claim 21**. Simpson discloses the limitations following the word 'optionally;' however, the Examiner does interpret the word 'optionally' as 'not necessarily having' the limitations following the word, 'optionally.'

Art Unit: 2877

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: U.S. Patent 5,998,796 to Liu et al.

U.S. Patent 6,630,063 to Li et al.

11. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

12. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Fax/Telephone Numbers

If the applicant wishes to send a fax dealing with either a proposed amendment or a discussion with a phone interview, then the fax should:

1) Contain either a statement "DRAFT" or "PROPOSED AMENDMENT" on the fax cover sheet; and

2) Should be unsigned by the attorney or agent.

This will ensure that it will not be entered into the case and will be forwarded to the examiner as quickly as possible.

• Application/Control Number: 10/031,353
Art Unit: 2877

Page 12

Papers related to the application may be submitted to Group 2800 by Fax transmission. Papers should be faxed to Group 2800 via the PTO Fax machine located in Crystal Plaza 4. The form of such papers must conform to the notice published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1989). The CP4 Fax Machine number is: (571) 273-8300

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gordon J. Stock whose telephone number is (571) 272-2431.

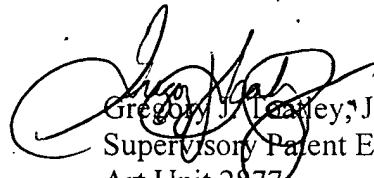
The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory J. Toatley, Jr., can be reached at 571-272-2800 ext 77.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private Pair system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


gs

April 15, 2006


Gregory J. Toatley, Jr.
Supervisor, Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2877
17 Apr 06